

THE SEPTUAGINT-VERSION, printed at Rome in the year 1587, has been during eleven years past under collation with its Manuscripts, and with other Editions of it; with Citations from it by Greek Fathers; and also with Manuscripts and Editions of the Italic, Coptic, Syriac, Arabic, Slavonian, Armenian, and Georgian Versions, all derived from the Greek Text.

Universities, Chapters, Colleges, and Individuals of Eminence in Rank and Learning, have supported this Collation by their munificent Subscriptions: and it has been carried on throughout Europe by the ablest Scholars of their time.

As this part of the undertaking is now drawing towards a conclusion, the Subscription thereto is closed, and another part of the work, namely **THE PUBLICATION OF THE COLLATIONS**, is become, in its turn, an object of consideration.

On the expediency of this work some observations have been already made in the First and Third Annual Accounts of the Collation. Among the points there insisted on, were these that follow:

I. The ANTIQUITY of the Septuagint-Version—As it was made more than a century and a half before the coming of Christ, it may be supposed that the Hebrew Copy, which the Seventy then translated, was more pure and perfect than later transcripts of it.

II. The ORIGINAL FIDELITY of the Version—From the time when it was made, till the second century of the Christian æra, it was used in the Sacred Service of the Jewish Church: and therefore it seems to have been deemed originally, and during that period, a just and faithful Version of the Hebrew Scriptures.

III. The AUTHORITY of the Version itself—It was the very instrument which the Providence of God used, in the conversion of both Jews and Gentiles to the Faith of Christ; and the early Christians had either that Version, or Translations from it, for their standing Bible.

IV. The UTILITY of it, when applied critically to the Hebrew Text—Through the whole succession of Biblical Literature, this Version has proved of eminent use, not only in pointing out places in which the Hebrew Copy of these days differs from that of earlier times; but even in notifying Original Hebrew Readings, which had disappeared.

V. The ALTERATIONS made in this Version by Editors, with views of accommodating it to the present Hebrew Text—As such a proceeding has rather tended to disqualify the Version for that very purpose, which it might otherwise be calculated to answer, what was at first its Own Genuine Text is become a question the more pressing and necessary. And it seems that the decision of this question must be rendered more easy and certain to every Biblical Scholar, when the tenour of the several Septuagint-Copies shall be presented under one view before him.

VI. The DIFFERENCES between the several Manuscript and Printed Copies of the Version—Its genuine Text is not, as the Learned well know, contained at present in any one Manuscript, or Edition: but lies dispersed in all the Copies, with more or less of Omission or Interpolation in every one. What has been omitted, and what interpolated, is likely to become more fully known, when those Readings, in which the several Copies differ, shall have been placed in one collected view.

To

To obtain the means necessary for publishing the above mentioned collations, early in the last year the following Letter of Request on the subject was presented to the Delegates of the Clarendon-Press :

" It is the wish of Dr. H. to present the University with the copy-right of the work. He therefore now respectfully offers it to the Delegates of the Press. To leave the Board an indemnification for incurring the expence of paper and printing, and to enable himself to discharge the Public from further Subscription, are equally objects with him. The following particulars are therefore submitted to the consideration of the Board.

" The Collation shall stand on the obligation originally entered into by Dr. H. He will, at his own expence, carry on the Impression to the end of the Pentateuch ; and when it shall have proceeded so far, all copies of the Pentateuch-books, remaining at that time unfold, shall be the property of the Board ; and what may have been received in the meanwhile for copies fold, he will account for in the usual way, as for other monies received to the use of the work.

" He will then present the Board with the Fount of Letter, which has been bought for printing the work.

" From the end of the Pentateuch to the end of the whole Impression, the expence of paper and printing shall be defrayed by the Delegates ; and the copy-right of the whole shall be theirs, they allowing Dr H. the smallest number of copies which they ever allowed to any Editor. Dr. H. supposing life and health to continue, will prepare the Copy throughout, and correct the press, and pay his own assistants, whether it shall please the Board to continue to him their present allowance or not."

The Answer of the Board was as follows :

FRIDAY, June 8, 1798.

" At a Meeting of the Delegates of the Press in the Delegates' Room—

" The Proposal of Dr. Holmes respecting the future Publication of the collations of the Septuagint, submitted to the Board, Feb. 2, 1798, having this day been taken into consideration ; the Vice-Chancellor was requested to inform him of the opinion of the Board ; that, with every good wish for the advancement of a work of such magnitude and importance, as that in which he is engaged, from a variety of circumstances it does not seem expedient to them that they should pledge the Revenues of the Press to so large an expenditure as would be necessary, in case the Proposal of Dr. Holmes was acceded to—at the same time, that, if Dr. Holmes should judge it right to solicit the Subscriptions of the Learned to the publication of the collations, they are entirely disposed to give to such Subscription every assistance in their power."

Under these circumstances, I have ventured upon an application to THE PUBLIC ; and solicit every Friend of Sacred Learning to confer upon this concluding part of the work, the generous Assistance of His Subscription.

The

The collations now intended for Publication have been made from more than three hundred Greek Manuscripts; from Coptic, Syriac, Arabic, Slavonian, and Armenian Manuscripts, to the amount of twenty or more; from Editions of the Greek Text, and of Versions, to the number of eleven at least; and nearly from thirty Greek Fathers.

From all the above sources, such a body of Various Readings has been derived, that, according to the best calculation which can be made at present, the whole cannot be comprised in fewer than Four Volumes.

The Form and Method, in which it is proposed to print the work, is as follows:

The Greek Text of the Vatican Edition, without any intended departure from it, except only as to its typographical mistakes, will be reprinted in Folio, and stand at the top of the page: and at the bottom of the several pages will be placed those Various Readings, which belong to the particular Verses of the Text above.

Septuagint-Manuscripts will be referred to by Numerical Figures, II, III, X, 29, 32, 75, 136, &c. the Manuscripts in the Uncial character being specified by Numerals of a capital form; and the Manuscripts not in the Uncial character, by Numerals of a smaller sort. Of the Numbers, applied to denote every Manuscript respectively, a Catalogue will be given, together with a Description and Account of the several Manuscripts, Editions, and Versions.

Editions, Fathers, and Versions, will be denoted either by Name, or by some other obvious and intelligible reference.

Proper explanations will be given of the few Symbolical Characters and Marks, which will occur throughout the work.

To each Scriptural book will be prefixed a Table, stating what portions of that book are contained in the several Manuscripts or Editions, which are cited in the course of it.

To each Scriptural book will be subjoined such Fragments of Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, and other Greek Interpreters, as are either not published hitherto, or, if published, have been represented otherwise than they appear in the margins of Manuscripts used in this work.

In engaging the Assistants necessary for preparing the Copy, and correcting the sheets, and in payments for paper and printing, so great an expence must unavoidably be incurred, that two hundred and fifty Subscriptions for each Volume will be wanted to enable me to print it, and fulfil the obligations contracted by this Proposal.

The Terms of Subscription are with all due deference proposed to be these:—That Twelve Guineas, at the rate of three for each Volume, be subscribed for One Copy of the Edition, and proportionably for more Copies than One, if desired. And as it would be of far greatest effect in accelerating the Impression, if the above Subscription could be obtained in One sum at the time of subscribing, the munificent Friends of this Publication will allow me to mention preferably that mode of contribution to it.—still, at the same time, it is also proposed that the above Twelve Guineas may

may be paid, if thought proper, at Four equal payments early in the years 1800, 1801, 1802, 1803, should the Subscriber live, and approve from year to year of the progress made in the Publication. And for every sum of Three Guineas, subscribed in either of the above modes, One Volume of the Edition shall be without further expence delivered to the Subscriber, by one or two books at a time, as they come from the Press.

But whatever sum, though inferior to the amount here specified, any Friend to this Publication may be pleased to subscribe, such Benefaction will be gratefully received, and allowed to the Subscriber, as a deduction from the price of the Edition.

Of Monies subscribed towards this Publication, of its progress, and of the expences incurred in it, an Annual Account will be given, as was done in the case of the Collation: and if life or health should not be continued to me, till the Publication can be completed; the unpublished Collations will lie, as originally stipulated, at the discretion of the Delegates of the Press, to whom the Sums received for publishing each Volume, and not expended for that purpose, shall be duly transferred.

Though the progress of the Publication must depend on the success of this Subscription, yet, while this Address is awaiting the consideration of THE PUBLIC, the Impression of the work shall be forwarded to the best of my power.

CHRIST-CHURCH,

Jan. 20, 1800.

ROBERT HOLMES.

OXFORD, Jan. 20, 1800.

At a Meeting of the Delegates of the Clarendon-Press in the Delegates' Room—

The Collations of the Septuagint-Version, according to the Proposals of Dr. Holmes in 1788, having been nearly brought to a conclusion, and Dr. Holmes having this day laid before the Delegates his Proposals for a Subscription for the PUBLICATION OF THE COLLATIONS—

RESOLVED:

That there be paid to Dr. Holmes in aid of this Publication the sum of One hundred and forty-four Guineas, being the amount of the proposed price of twelve copies; the Delegates hoping that Dr. Holmes will meet with such further encouragement, as will enable him to go forward in a work of so much consideration and real importance.

And they think it right also to apprise the Public, that although it did not seem expedient to them to pledge themselves for the expenditure necessary for the whole Impression, as appears by their answer to Dr. Holmes's Proposals dated June 8, 1798, yet, in the case of the death of Dr. Holmes, or his being obliged through ill health to relinquish the superintendence of the work, the Delegates will be answerable to the Subscribers for the sums transferred from Dr. Holmes, and proceed to the finishing the Publication so far as may be in their power, and consistent with their other obligations.

Subscriptions will be received by the Editor; Messrs. Payne; White; Bremner; Robson; in London: Stanwell and Parker; Cooke; in Oxford: Deighton; in Cambridge.



